

# Advice note for pre-registration inspections of free schools

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School name	Hatfield Community Free School
DfE registration number	999/1261
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Inspection number	403980
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Reporting inspector	David Young

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## **Context of the school**

The Hatfield Community Free School is to be located in the centre of Hatfield in Hertfordshire. It is sponsored by the Hatfield Community Free School Trust. It will occupy new buildings funded by the local authority as there is a need for additional primary school places in the town. The school has contingency arrangements for the use of suitable temporary accommodation at a local secondary school should there be any unforeseen delay in completion of the building. The school will be registered to admit up to 420 pupils in the age range 4 to 11 years. There will also be an independent nursery and child care provider in the same building. The school proposes to open with an intake of 60 children in the age range 4 to 5 years on 6 September 2012. The school will admit some pupils with special educational needs. The school aims to improve the life chances of local children and families and to be among the highest performing schools nationally and in the county.

## **Compliance with the regulations**

### **Spiritual, moral, social and cultural development of pupils**

Documentary evidence indicates that all regulations are likely to be met but implementation could not be seen. The school's education brief includes a commitment to positivity and success in which all pupils are encouraged to thrive. There will be a strong focus on the whole child, their spiritual, emotional and social wellbeing, and the development of emotional resilience to succeed in the face of adversity. The school aims to develop confident and self-motivated pupils who know right from wrong and understand their rights and responsibilities. The programmes for personal, social and health education and citizenship will involve pupils in class and school councils; community activities; fund raising events; and valuing diversity. Pupils will be given a strong voice through the school councils, consultation sessions, questionnaires and sharing sessions. The religious education curriculum is designed to enable pupils to develop an understanding of the influence of beliefs, values and traditions on individuals, societies and cultures. It will enable pupils to respect diversity of beliefs and cultures. Assemblies are planned to give pupils a reflective approach to life, including the involvement of local religious leaders. The school's planned events calendar includes celebration of major festivals, study of the local town and services, community events such as bonfire night, father's day and concerts at various times in the year.

### **Welfare, health and safety of pupils**

Documentary evidence indicates that all regulations are likely to be met but implementation could not be seen. The policy for promoting positive behaviour includes reference to appropriate rewards and the use of school charters to develop a consistent commitment to the school's high expectations by pupils, together with their parents and carers. A system of rewards, consequences and sanctions is documented, together with arrangements for the recording and monitoring of

incidents. A related policy sets out arrangements for the prevention of bullying which is integrated with the school's race equality policy. The documentation provides clear guidance to enable all staff to work together with parents and carers to create a positive environment for learning in a consistent manner.

The safeguarding of pupils is assured through the recruitment policy which covers all required checks on the suitability of staff. The related safeguarding policy names the designated person for child protection who has had recent training to the required level for the role. Child protection for all staff is planned for the pre-opening induction programme and will be updated annually. The educational visits policy defines appropriate levels of responsibility; states the requirement for risk assessment of all off-site visits; and applies comprehensive procedures to ensure the safety and well-being of pupils.

A fire safety strategy has been devised as part of the planning for the new building. Arrangements have been agreed for the attendance of the local fire officer to assist with the production of a suitable premises fire risk assessment on completion of the building work. Suitable arrangements are in place for the regular routine checks on fire safety equipment. The health and safety policy defines roles and includes procedures for safe implementation of fire evacuations, first aid and accident reporting. A commercial management information system has been purchased which includes appropriate systems for recording the admission and attendance registers, together with all required records of incidents, accidents and sanctions for any serious misbehaviour. The school complies with the requirements of the Equality Act 2012 and has in place a development plan which includes plans for increasing accessibility over time once the school is open.

### **Suitability of staff, supply staff, and proprietors**

The school's planning for the completion of all required checks on the suitability of staff, and its implementation to date, indicate that all regulations are likely to be met. A suitable structure has been designed for the single central register of checks on the suitability of staff. Details of all required checks for staff, proprietors and governors are being entered as checks are completed.

### **Premises of and accommodation at the school**

The school is likely to meet all the requirements for registration. The premises and accommodation consist of a new building which is under construction at present. The site has been included in this inspection and plans have been seen. Construction is well advanced and it is anticipated that the building will be completed and ready for occupation when the school opens.

A contingency arrangement has been made to use temporary accommodation at a nearby secondary school should there be any delay with completion of the building. The alternative use has been approved by the local fire service and a full fire risk assessment completed. A fence is being constructed to provide secure and separate outside space for use by the free school. Additional portable toilets are to be installed

on the temporary site to supplement those in the temporary building. This temporary accommodation is suitable for short-term use by the free school, should it be required.

The new building provides extensive teaching spaces of suitable size for the full planned age range of the school. There are sufficient toilets, a room for any pupil who may be ill, suitable facilities for the preparation and serving of food, and adequate office and administration space. There is adequate space to extend the curriculum for the youngest children into the outside environment. In addition, there is extensive outside space for play and recreation for all pupils, including hard surfaced and grassed area for physical education and games. The site is fully secure with appropriate separation of traffic movement from the recreation areas.

### **Provision of information**

The provision is likely to meet all the regulations.

### **Manner in which complaints are to be handled**

The provision meets all regulations.

## **Recommendation to the Department for Education**

### **Registration**

Is registration recommended?

**YES. This school is likely to meet all regulations when it opens and is recommended for registration.**

Recommended number of day pupils: 420

Recommended number of boarders or residential pupils (if applicable): n/a

Recommended age range: 4 to 11 years

Recommended gender of pupils: Mixed

Recommended type of special educational needs: n/a